



# Homeland Security

*Privacy Office, Mail Stop 0655*

December 5, 2011

Mr. Jason Smathers  
MuckRock News  
DEPT MR 934  
PO Box 55819  
Boston, Massachusetts 02205-5819

**Re: DHS/OS/PRIV 12-0105**

Dear Mr. Smathers:

This acknowledges receipt of your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), dated and received in this office on November 29, 2011, and to your request for a waiver of all assessable FOIA fees. Specifically, you requested:

“All records on, about, mentioning or [concerning] the request for Obama Sr.’s A-File to be provided to Delores Barber in unredacted format after being released to a requester under the FOIA [including but not limited to] the responsive records to those that show how the unredacted copy was used and why it was requested to be sent to the DHS Office of Privacy in or around April of 2011.”

Due to the increasing number of FOIA requests received by this office, we may encounter some delay in processing your request. Per Section 5.5(a) of the DHS FOIA regulations, 6 C.F.R. Part 5, the Department processes FOIA requests according to their order of receipt. Although DHS’ goal is to respond within 20 business days of receipt of your request, the FOIA does permit a 10-day extension of this time period. As your request seeks numerous documents that will necessitate a thorough and wide-ranging search, DHS will invoke a 10-day extension for your request, as allowed by Title 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(B). If you care to narrow the scope of your request, please contact our office.

As it relates to your fee waiver request, I have reviewed your letter thoroughly and have determined that you have not presented a convincing argument that Jason Smathers is entitled to a blanket waiver of fees.

The DHS FOIA Regulations, 6 CFR § 5.11(k)(2), set forth six factors to examine in determining whether the applicable legal standard for a fee waiver has been met. We will consider these factors in our evaluation of your request for a fee waiver:

- (1) Whether the subject of the requested records concerns “the operations or activities of the government;”

- (2) Whether the disclosure is "likely to contribute" to an understanding of government operations or activities;
- (3) Whether disclosure of the requested information will contribute to the understanding of the public at large, as opposed to the individual understanding of the requestor or a narrow segment of interested persons;
- (4) Whether the contribution to public understanding of government operations or activities will be "significant;"
- (5) Whether the requestor has a commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure; and
- (6) Whether the magnitude of any identified commercial interest to the requestor is sufficiently large in comparison with the public interest in disclosure, that disclosure is primarily in the commercial interest of the requestor.

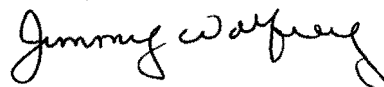
As a requestor, you bear the burden under the FOIA of showing that the fee waiver requirements have been met. Based on my review of your November 29, 2011 email and for the reasons stated herein, I have determined that your fee waiver request is deficient because 1) the disclosure of the requested information will not contribute to the understanding of the public at large, as opposed to the individual understanding of the requestor or a narrow segment of the interested persons and 2) the contribution to public understanding of government operations or activities will not be "significant". Since your request for a fee waiver has failed to satisfy each of the required factors, I am denying your fee waiver request.

Provisions of the Act allow us to recover part of the cost of complying with your request. We shall charge you for records in accordance with the DHS Interim FOIA regulations as they apply to non-commercial requestors. As a non-commercial requestor you will be charged 10-cents a page for duplication, although the first 100 pages are free, as are the first two hours of search time, after which you will pay the per quarter-hour rate (\$4.00, \$7.00, \$10.25) of the searcher. We will construe the submission of your request as an agreement to pay up to \$25.00. You will be contacted before any further fees are accrued.

You have the right to appeal the determination to deny your fee waiver request. Should you wish to do so, you must **send your appeal within 60 days of the date of this letter** to: Associate General Counsel (General Law), U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Washington, D.C. 20528, following the procedures outlined in Subpart A, Section 5.9, of the DHS Regulations. Your envelope and letter should be marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal." The implementing Department regulations establish the criteria under which the FOIA is administered. Copies of the FOIA and regulations are available at [www.DHS.gov](http://www.DHS.gov).

Your request has been assigned reference number **DHS/OS/PRIV 12-0105**. Please refer to this identifier in any future correspondence. If you have any questions, or would like to discuss this matter, please feel free to contact this office at 1- 866-431-0486 or 703-235-0790.

Sincerely,



Jimmy Wolfrey  
FOIA Program Specialist